

How can I protect myself from hepatitis B?

The younger you are when you get hepatitis B, the sicker you can be. So, get three hepatitis B shots. All babies, children, and teens should get the shots.

Should adults get hepatitis B shots?

Adults should get three hepatitis B shots if they are:

- in contact with blood or body fluids of a person who has hepatitis B
- men who have sex with men
- having sex with more than one partner or with a partner who shoots drugs
- using needles to shoot drugs
- living in the same house with someone who has hepatitis B
- having chronic liver problems

How safe is the vaccine?

The hepatitis B vaccine is one of the safest vaccines there is. It has been used in the United States since 1982.

Where can I get hepatitis B shots?

Talk to your doctor or nurse to see if you need the shots.



**Call your doctor, your local health
department or
1-888-76-SHOTS**

*Michigan Department
of Community Health*



**Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Janet Olszewski, Director**

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THE DANGERS OF HEPATITIS B:

- What they are
- How to avoid them



HEPATITIS B VACCINE

IS
YOUR BEST
BET.
GET ALL THREE
SHOTS!

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by a virus that infects the liver. It can lead to severe illness, life-long disease, scarring (cirrhosis) of the liver, liver failure, liver cancer or death.

How do people get hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is spread from person to person through blood and other body fluids. You can get it from people who have hepatitis B by:

- coming in contact with their blood or body fluids
- having unsafe sex with them
- sharing toothbrushes, razors, nail clippers, or needles with them
- sharing ear piercing, body piercing or tattooing equipment with them

Some people (25%-30%) who get hepatitis B do not have any of these risk factors. Most people with hepatitis B don't know they have it because they don't show signs of illness.

A pregnant woman who has hepatitis B can give it to her baby at birth. Babies born to these mothers need to get the first shot of vaccine and a shot called HBIG at birth. These babies also need a second shot at one month, a third shot at six months, and a blood test by one year of age.

People with signs of hepatitis may:

- feel tired all the time
- have mild fever
- have aching muscles or joints
- have stomach pain
- have an upset stomach
- have diarrhea
- throw up a lot
- have jaundice (yellowing of skin or eyes)
- have dark urine
- have light-colored stools
- not feel hungry

You cannot look at someone and tell that he or she has hepatitis B. The only way for people to know if they have hepatitis B is to get a blood test.

What happens if I get hepatitis B?

People can get over the hepatitis B virus in about six months, or they can have it for the rest of their lives. People with hepatitis B can:

- give it to others
- have no signs of being ill for many years
- feel tired or ill
- suffer from liver problems, such as cirrhosis (scarring) or cancer

